

STATINTL

20 November 1952

November 17, 1952

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2430 E Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mike:

We spent most of the past two weeks attempting to evaluate the Agency decision to terminate the [redacted] portion of the indexing project on December 31, 1952. We regard this decision to terminate support as untimely and inappropriate, both with regard to investment already made by the Agency and with regard to the several needs of the country.

Although our progress during 1952 has been rapid, we are not now as far along in accomplishing our program as we had hoped to be a year ago. Security clearances impeded bringing in needed personnel. Initiation of the program was delayed for at least three months by lack of needed space and clerical personnel at the Agency. We also believe that much of the present concern in the Agency could have been avoided if we had been able to convince our administrative contacts there that they had begun a research project which could not be tightly scheduled rather than a production job.

A well thought out program for developing a skeletal indexing system based on ISC terminology was presented to [redacted] on October 11, 1952 and it is urged that it would be wise to carry this through at least to the point of testing the skeleton code with intelligence documents, which, it is anticipated, can be accomplished not later than April 1953. This would require that certain key persons - namely [redacted] - continue on this project.

As far as [redacted] is concerned, there is great reluctance to see the group that has been working on machine indexing at [redacted] completely disbanded. This group has made steady progress during recent years. Closing out the [redacted] group on January 1, 1953 would cause loss of momentum at a critical moment, both with regard to the Agency's interests and the whole future development of machine indexing. In urging that financial arrangements be made to retain a center of activity at [redacted] through the spring of 1953, it is understood that effort during the coming months will be centered on carrying through the development and testing of the skeleton system based on the ISC.

Approximately \$20,000 will be needed by [redacted] to support the [redacted] group from January 1 to July 1, 1953. It is our understanding from our last conference in your office that this amount of money can be made available without difficulty on your part. Perhaps you will prefer to allocate to [redacted] part of the money already earmarked for the Agency's machine indexing project. [redacted] informs us

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that the suggested sum could be made available from his budget but this would require a supplemental authorization on your part. Please let us know if we can be of assistance in working out the details of Nabuich's note, in this connection, that we are not proposing to transfer [redacted] back to the [redacted] payroll during the period January 1 to July 1, 1953.

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In carrying through along the recommended lines, it is necessary that the Agency provide adequate support in Washington.

Realistic testing and further development of the new indexing system will require that analysts in various OSI divisions mark and annotate documents as to indicate what they regard as the most important features of the information in the documents. A minimum of 30 documents from each OSI division is proposed.

Tests with documents marked by OSI analysts will provide a basis for judging and demonstrating the value of machine indexing to OSI and to the Agency in general. Furthermore, such tests will provide a basis for developing detailed plans for incorporating the new machine indexing system into Agency operations.

Other support now being provided by the Agency will need to be continued, in particular: space for machines and personnel in Washington, clerical support (three or four clerks assigned to the project and access to the pool), unpunched IBM cards and other office supplies, permission to work overtime as needed, use of standard IBM equipment in RISTA, maintenance of all the experimental IBM equipment.

In our opinion, [redacted] has been the source of serious disharmony within the group, and we believe that the next phase of the project would proceed better without his participation.

With best regards,

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PW:dga